

24/04/2026 Daily Current News

Prelims articles:

1. *National Panchayati Raj Day:*

Context: National Panchayati Raj Day to be celebrated Pan India on 24th April 2026.

About National Panchayati Raj Day:

- ❖ The Ministry of Panchayati Raj will celebrate National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD) on 24th April 2026 at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- ❖ Observed every year on 24th April, the day commemorates the enactment of the landmark 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, that gave constitutional status and legal recognition to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) across India.
- ❖ This year marks 33 years of that defining milestone in India's democratic journey.
- ❖ The theme for National Panchayati Raj Day 2026 is "Sashakt Panchayat, Sarvangeen Vikas" (Empowered Panchayats, Holistic Development).

2. *National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme:*

Context: A total of 90,942 sewer and septic tank workers have been profiled, of which 89,248 have been validated under National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme.

About National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) Scheme:

- ❖ NAMASTE Scheme was launched in 2022 as a Central Sector Scheme.
- ❖ Implemented jointly by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ❖ Aim: Eliminate unsafe sewer and septic tank cleaning practices in India.
- ❖ Objective: Achieve zero fatalities in sanitation work.
- ❖ Ensures sanitation work is carried out only by skilled workers using safe practices.
- ❖ Seeks to eliminate direct human contact with faecal matter during sanitation work.
- ❖ Promotes formation of Self-Help Groups and sanitation enterprises among workers.
- ❖ Strengthens monitoring and supervisory systems at National, State, and Urban Local Body levels.
- ❖ Focuses on awareness generation for hiring registered and trained sanitation workers.
- ❖ Includes identification of Sewer and Septic Tank Workers across all Urban Local Bodies.
- ❖ Provides occupational training and Personal Protective Equipment kits to sanitation workers.
- ❖ Supports Sanitation Response Units with safety devices and equipment.
- ❖ Extends benefits of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana to sanitation workers and their families.
- ❖ Provides livelihood assistance, subsidies, and funding for mechanisation and sanitation equipment purchase.
- ❖ Information, Education and Communication campaigns are conducted jointly by Urban Local Bodies and National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation.

3. *Doping:*

Context: Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) downgraded the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) from 'Category B' to 'Category A'.

Doping in India:

- ❖ Doping in Sports refers to the use of artificial or prohibited substances to gain unfair advantage in sporting competitions.
- ❖ Common examples include anabolic steroids, human growth hormones, stimulants, and diuretics.
- ❖ India recorded 48 Anti-Doping Rule Violations in 2022, ranking second globally.
- ❖ India reported 63 Anti-Doping Rule Violations in 2023, again ranking second globally.
- ❖ In 2024, India recorded 71 Anti-Doping Rule Violations, ranking first globally.
- ❖ India's doping positivity ratio stood at 3.6%, among the highest in the world.
- ❖ Major causes include performance pressure, financial incentives, and weak testing and monitoring systems.

More details:

- ❖ Athletics Integrity Unit is an independent international body overseeing integrity in athletics and operates separately from World Athletics.
- ❖ The body is headquartered in Monaco.
- ❖ It governs integrity matters related to track and field, race walking, road running, cross country, mountain, trail, and ultra-running events.
- ❖ The downgrading reflects concerns over an “extremely high” risk of doping among athletes in India.
- ❖ Placement of Athletics Federation of India in Category A imposes stricter anti-doping compliance requirements on athletes.
- ❖ Athletics Federation of India is the apex body managing athletics in India.
- ❖ It conducts National Championships and oversees training of Indian athletics campers.
- ❖ It is responsible for selecting Indian teams for international athletics competitions.

4. *Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFVs):*

Context: India is considering transition to FFVs to reduce dependence on imported crude.

About Flex Fuel Vehicles (FFVs):

- ❖ Flexible Fuel Vehicle (FFV) is a modified vehicle that can run on petrol or petrol–ethanol blends.
- ❖ Presently, most FFVs can operate on gasoline mixed with ethanol up to 83% concentration (E83).
- ❖ New-generation FFVs are being designed to run even on E100, which is pure ethanol.
- ❖ FFVs use internal combustion engines similar to normal petrol vehicles.
- ❖ Their fuel systems are specially modified to handle ethanol safely and efficiently.
- ❖ FFVs also have different engine and powertrain calibration for using multiple fuel blends.
- ❖ Vehicles running on higher ethanol blends often show better acceleration performance.

5. *English Channel:*

Context: Britain and France are set to unveil a three-year multimillion-euro agreement aimed at reducing the number of migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, with more patrols and enhanced surveillance in northern France.

About English Channel:



- ❖ English Channel is a narrow arm of the Atlantic Ocean.
- ❖ It separates southern England from northern France.
- ❖ It connects with the North Sea through the Strait of Dover in the east.
- ❖ The French call it “La Manche” due to its sleeve-like shape.
- ❖ The term “English Channel” became common in the 18th century.
- ❖ Area: About 75,000 sq. km, making it the smallest shallow sea on Europe’s continental shelf.
- ❖ Average depth: Around 63 metres.
- ❖ Climate: Temperate maritime climate with warm summers and cold winters.
- ❖ Major islands include the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands (Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Sark).
- ❖ It is one of the world’s busiest shipping routes.
- ❖ It links the Atlantic Ocean with the North Sea.
- ❖ Around 20% of global maritime trade passes through it.

6. *Toxic rain:*

Context: Russia reports toxic rain as oil depot hit in Ukraine strike.

About Toxic rain:

- ❖ Toxic rain is another term for acid rain caused by atmospheric pollution.
- ❖ It forms when sulphur dioxide (SO_2) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) react with water vapour in the atmosphere.
- ❖ Main sources include thermal power plants, industries, vehicles, and fossil fuel burning.
- ❖ Acid rain can occur as rain, snow, fog, or dry acidic particles.

- ❖ It lowers the pH of soil and water bodies, harming ecosystems.
- ❖ Lakes and rivers become acidic, affecting fish and aquatic life.
- ❖ It damages crops, forests, and reduces soil fertility.
- ❖ Acid rain corrodes buildings, monuments, metals, and limestone structures.
- ❖ Human exposure may cause respiratory problems and skin irritation.
- ❖ Important pollutants responsible: sulphuric acid and nitric acid.
- ❖ Prevention measures include reducing fossil fuel use, installing scrubbers in industries, using cleaner fuels, and promoting renewable energy.
- ❖ International cooperation is important because air pollutants can travel across borders.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ In a major development, National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Ltd. (NCCF) has initiated organised procurement of masoor (lentil) in Bihar for the first time, marking a key step towards self-reliance in pulse production.
- ☐ The Information Warfare is rapidly emerging as the fourth dimension of warfare in addition to air, land, and sea - from India's Operation Sindoor to ongoing US-Iran War. Information Warfare is a term used to describe the collection, distribution, modification, disruption, interference with corruption and degradation of information in order to gain some advantage over an adversary.
- ☐ Türkiye's Parliament has passed a new Bill aimed at restricting access to social media platforms for children under the age of 15.
- ☐ Finland is preparing to operationalise the world's first permanent underground repository for highly radioactive nuclear waste. Located beneath Olkiluoto Island, the Onkalo facility is designed to safely store spent nuclear fuel for up to 100,000 years.
- ☐ The 2026 SAFF Women's Championship, scheduled to be hosted by India in Goa, will now be played with six teams after Pakistan officially withdrew from the tournament.
- ☐ The Sports Authority of India has sanctioned over ₹1.45 crore in financial and logistical assistance for a 34 member Indian contingent participating in the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals in Denmark. The Thomas and Uber Cup are premier international badminton team tournaments organized by the Badminton World Federation (BWF).
- ☐ Cold spark technology is a modern, noiseless, and safer alternative to traditional fireworks. It works by heating fine metal alloy powders such as titanium and zirconium and ejecting them through a controlled device to create bright spark effects without explosive combustion. Unlike conventional fireworks, cold spark systems produce minimal smoke, low noise, and operate at much lower temperatures, reducing risks of burns and fire accidents.

